

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 IO-10 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 EUR-12 SAJ-01 OMB-01 /093 W

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R 301330Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7569

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO 10909

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, EG

SUBJECT: MULTIPOLICTY OF FORUMS WITHIN ASU

SUMMARY: IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRESIDENT SADAT'S DECISION ENCOURAGE "MULTIPOLICTY OF POLITICAL FORUMS" WITHIN ARAB SOCIALIST UNION, THREE GROUPS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN ESTABLISHED. ALL THREE REFLECT MODERATE, ANTI-NASSERIST TENDENCIES. A LEFTIST GROUPING HAS NOT YET BEEN PROCLAIMED BUT IS EXPECTED SOON, ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE THAT PROMINENT LEFTISTS HAVE DECIDED NOT TO LEND THEIR PRESTIGE TO WHAT THEY REGARD AS GOE CONTROLLED SUBSTITUTE FOR POLITICAL PARTIES NOW. THREE GROUPS ALREADY IN EXISTENCE LACK A REAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND APPEAR TO BE VEHICLES FOR AMBITIONS OF THEIR FOUNDERS. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS A MODEST MOVE IN DIRECTION OF POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION. END SUMMARY.

1. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT PEOPLES ASSEMBLY DEBATE SUMMER OF 1974 ON ADVISABILITY OF REINTRODUCTION POLITICAL PARTIES IN EGYPT ENDED WITH EXECUTIVE DECISION THAT TIME WAS NOT RIPE FOR THIS STEP. INSTEAD, ACCORDING TO PRESIDENT SADAT'S WIDELY-PUBLICIZED VIEWS, MEANINGFUL DEBATE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED WITHIN RPT WITH ARAB SOCIALIST UNION. IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS GOAL, IT WOULD BE PERMISSABLE TO FOUND ASU GROUPS WHICH WOULD HAVE SPECIFIC PLATFORMS.

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2. SO FAR THREE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY MEMBERS HAVE ANNOUNCED FORMATION OF SUCH GROUPS WITHIN ASU:

A. DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS. PEOPLES ASSEMBLY MEMBER ABU WAFIYA HAS ANNOUNCED FORMATION OF GROUP WHOSE PLATFORM INCLUDES SUPREMACY OF LAW, FAIR DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONAL WEALTH, ADHERENCE TO DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES, AND ADOPTION OF A SOCIALISM WHICH RELIES ON GOD. IN AHRAM INTERVIEW OCTOBER 23, ABU WAFIYA SAID HIS PLATFORM HAS BEEN APPROVED BY ASU AND MEMBERSHIP IN GROUP IS OPEN TO ALL ASU MEMBERS. ABU WAFIYA HAS TWO UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS: HE IS MRS. SADAT'S BROTHER-IN-LAW AND HE COMES FROM AWLAD ALI TRIBES IN WESTERN DESERT. IT IS NOT SURPRISING, THEREFORE, THAT HIS "PLATFORM" RESEMBLES PRESIDENT SADAT'S PUBLIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERNAL REFORM INCLUDING DIRECT LINKAGE TO SIX PRINCIPLES OF 1952 REVOLUTION, ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRIVATE SECTOR, AND ADMINISTRATIVE "REVOLUTION" TO "GET RID" OF UNPRODUCTIVE LAZY ELEMENTS IN PUBLIC SECTOR.

B. SOCIALIST LIBERALS. PEOPLES ASSEMBLY MEMBER MUSTAFA MURAD HAS INVITED ASU MEMBERS TO JOIN HIS GROUP WHICH WILL EMPHASIZE FREEDOM OF PRIVATE SECTOR, DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SECTOR ESPECIALLY IN HEAVY INDUSTRIAL FIELD, FULL INDEPENDENCE OF JUDICIARY, FREEDOM OF PRESS, REJECTION OF CLASS CONFLICTS, SOCIAL JUSTICE, BALANCED RELATIONS WITH THE TWO SUPER POWERS, AND, ABOVE ALL, EMPHASIS ON EGYPTIAN CHARACTER AND TRADITIONS. MURAD IS MODERATE EX-ARMY OFFICER WHOSE VIEW ARE ANTI-NASSERIST. HE BELIEVES FIRMLY, HOWEVER, THAT EGYPT'S FOREIGN POLICY SHOULD REFLECT NOT JUST DEPENDENCE UPON USG BUT ALSO THAT SOVIETS' LEGITIMATE INTEREST IN ME MUST BE RECOGNIZED.

C. REVOLUTIONARY PROGRESSIVES. PEOPLES ASSEMBLY MEMBER AHMAD AL-GABALI HAS ANNOUNCED ESTABLISHMENT OF A THIRD GROUP WITH PLATFORM OF 18 PLANKS WHICH DIFFER LITTLE FROM THOSE ANNOUNCED BY ABU WAFIYA AND MUSTAFA MURAD.

3. COMMENT: FOR SOME MONTHS IT HAD BEEN EXPECTED THAT THREE OR POSSIBLY FOUR ASU GROUPINGS WOULD BE ESTABLISHED REFLECTING THE CURRENT INFORMAL LEFT, RIGHT, AND CENTER BLOCS WITHIN PEOPLES ASSEMBLY. THE THREE GROUPS ALREADY FOUNDED WOULD
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SEEM, HOWEVER, TO SPRING FROM THE CENTER OR THE RIGHT. PROMINENT EGYPTIANS EXPECT WELL-KNOWN EGYPTIAN COMMUNIST KHALID MUHI AL-DIN, WHO WAS MEMBERS OF ORIGINAL RCC, TO ANNOUNCE ESTABLISHMENT SHORTLY OF A LEFTIST GROUP WITHIN ASU. HE IS MEMBER OF ASU CENTRAL COMMITTEE BUT WAS NOT RE-ELECTED TO PEOPLES ASSEMBLY IN 1971. LEFTIST WEEKLY ROSE AL-YUSUF OCTOBER 20 SPECULATED THAT MUHI AL-DIN'S PLATFORM WOULD BE BASED ON CALL FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY ON

ANY TERRITORY EVACUATED BY ISRAEL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRESSIVE

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CAIRO 10909

FRONT FROM ATLANTIC TO GULF.

4. WE FIND IT RATHER PECULIAR THAT RECOGNIZED LEFTISTS SUCH AS MUHI AL-DIN OR MAHMUD AL-QADI HAVE NOT YET PROCLAIMED A LEFTIST PLATFORM WITHIN ASU. AS LATE AS OCTOBER 26 ASU HEAD MAHGUB TOLD CHARGE THAT HE EXPECTED CALL FOR CLASS STRUGGLE TO EMERGE FROM COMMUNISTS WITHIN ASU AND THAT HE HAS THEREFORE SELECTED NEW ASU SLOGAN, "SOCIAL PEACE". IT IS JUST POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT LEFTISTS HAVE DECIDED NOT TO PLAY SADAT'S ASU GAME, PREFERRING TO HOLD OUT FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF TRADITIONAL PARTY SYSTEM. THIS COULD BE REASON BEHIND AZIZ SIDQI'S SUDDEN UNEXPLAINED RESIGNATION FROM PEOPLES ASSEMBLY OCTOBER 29 FOR "HEALTH AND BUSINESS REASONS." SIDQI IS LEADING LEFTIST AND TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE IS IN GOOD HEALTH AND HAS FEW BUSINESS RESPONSIBILITIES.

5. THE ISLAMIC RIGHT HAS SO FAR NOT BEEN HEARD FROM, ALTHOUGH ONE REPORTED HAS SUGGESTED SUCH A GROUP SHOULD BE FORMED WITHIN THE ASU, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE IT WOULD PROVIDE YOUTH OF RELIGIOUS PROCLIVITIES AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK UP AND BE HEARD IN A REGULAR FORUM.

6. ASU HEAD MAHGUB MADE ODD COMMENT TO CHARGE ABOUT ULTIMATE DISPOSITION OF NEW FORUMS WITHIN ASU. HE CLAIMED ASU ITSELF MAY

EVENTUALLY DEVELOP INTO SEPARTE MAJORITY POLITICAL PARTY. THIS
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IS MOST CERTAINLY NOT THE ENUNCIATED AIM OF SADAT NOR IS IT THE
EXPECTATION OF PARLIAMENTARY FIGURES TO WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN.
THEY ASSUME THEIR GROUPS WILL ULTIMATELY DEVOLVE INTO POLITICAL
PARTIES AT WHICH POINT THE ASU WILL HAVE TO BE TOTALLY REORGANIZED.
SUCH A RADICAL POLITICAL REORGANIZATION IS NOT EXPECTED HERE BEFORE
1977 AND PROBABLY WILL OCCUR WELL AFTER 1977. MAHGUB SAYS THAT
PARTIES MIGHT EMERGE WITHIN FIVE YEARS, BUT WE WOULD HAZARD THE
GUESS THAT THIS IS UNLIKELY UNLESS ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE IS WELL
ON WAY TO FINAL AND COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT BY THAT TIME.

7. WHETHER THEY DEVELOP INTO POLITICAL PARTIES OR NOT, FORUMS
REPRESENT A HEALTHY, IF MODEST, MOVE TOWARD GREATER FREEDOM OF
EXPRESSION WITHIN ASU AND A LIMITED POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION IN EGYPT

THEY SHOULD IN TIME CONTRIBUTE TO THE KIND OF DEBATE AND
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM THAT COULD SERVE TO BRING INTO SHARP
FOCUS THE STRENGTHS AND SHORTCOMINGS OF GOE POLICIES.
MAESTRONE

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